



PLAY POINT:

The word "blood" appears in the play *Macbeth* 24 times—more than in any other Shakespeare play.

N1: Macbeth's tone grows serious.

MACBETH: After the battle, Banquo and I met three witches. They can see the future. They already knew Duncan had promoted me.

LADY M: What else did they tell you?

MACBETH: They said I'd be King one day.

LADY M (excited): I've always wanted to be Queen!

N2: Macbeth looks into his wife's eyes. Both have murder on their minds.

MACBETH: Duncan plans to stay at our castle tonight and leave early tomorrow.

LADY M: Oh, he's not going anywhere.

MACBETH: What are you suggesting?

LADY M (smiling): Don't look at me like that. I know you're thinking the same thing.

MACBETH: I'm not sure if we should do it. Duncan is a kind and popular King.

LADY M: Don't look so guilty; you'll make everyone **suspicious**. Look like the innocent flower, but be the serpent under it.

SCENE 4

N3: That evening, the King and his lords arrive at Macbeth's castle.

LADY M: Welcome, your Highness.

DUNCAN: Thank you, dear lady.

N4: Later, while everyone else sleeps, Macbeth creeps out of bed.

N1: In the black night, a storm rages.

N2: Outside Duncan's room a ghostly knife appears, floating in the air.

MACBETH: Is this a dagger which I see before me, the handle toward my hand?

N3: Macbeth tries to grab the dagger,

but his hand passes through it.

MACBETH (scared): Now blood is dripping from the blade!

N4: He takes a deep breath.

MACBETH: I'm seeing things. That knife is just an **illusion**.

N1: Macbeth draws his own dagger and sneaks into Duncan's room.

N2: Lady Macbeth slinks out of bed. Lightning flashes. She hears a cry.

LADY M (to herself): What was that?

N3: Macbeth tiptoes out of Duncan's room and sees Lady Macbeth.

MACBETH (in shock): I have done the deed. I have killed Duncan.

N4: He looks at his bloody hands.

MACBETH: This is a sorry sight. I'm afraid to think what I have done.

LADY M: Don't think about it. It will make you crazy. Wash your hands.

MACBETH: Could an ocean wash this blood clean from my hand?

LADY M: Quick, before everyone wakes up!

MACBETH: If only Duncan could!

SCENE 5

N1: A few hours later, Lord Macduff and Lord Lennox join Macbeth in the main hall of the castle.

LENNOX: Good morning.

MACDUFF: Is the King up yet?

MACBETH (guiltily): Not yet.

MACDUFF: He asked me to wake him.

N2: Macduff opens the door to Duncan's room.

MACDUFF: O horror, horror, horror!

LENNOX: What's the matter?

MACDUFF: Murder and treason!

N3: Lady Macbeth enters.

LADY M (innocently): What's going on?

MACDUFF (to Lady Macbeth): I can't tell you. You're so sensitive.

N4: Next, Banquo arrives.

MACDUFF: O Banquo, our royal master's murdered!

LADY M: What, in our house?

N1: Banquo is puzzled by Lady Macbeth's reaction.

BANQUO (frowning): It would be terrible wherever it happened.

Dear Duff, say it is not so.

MACBETH (sincerely): I feel awful. Now that Duncan's dead, life seems sad and empty.

N2: Duncan's sons, Donalbain and Malcolm, enter the hall.

DONALBAIN: What's wrong?

MACDUFF: Your father has been murdered!

MALCOLM (horrified): Who did it?

LENNOX: We don't know.

N3: They all look at each other, their eyes full of suspicion. Lady Macbeth begins to sway.

LADY M: Oh, I'm fainting!

N4: While the other lords fuss over her, the King's sons move aside.

MALCOLM (whispering): We're next in line for the crown. Whoever killed

our father will soon come after us.

DONALBAIN (looking around):

Anyone here might have done it. In Scotland, we can't trust a soul. There are **daggers in men's smiles**.

MALCOLM: Let's get out of here.

N1: Donalbain leaves for Ireland, and Malcolm for England.

SCENE 6

N2: It is easy for Macbeth to charge Duncan's sons with his murder, since they are not there to defend themselves.

N3: With the King's sons out of the country, the next man in line for the throne is Duncan's cousin Macbeth. A few days later, he is crowned King of Scotland.

N4: At Macbeth's castle, the atmosphere is heavy, and full of distrust. One afternoon, Macbeth sees Banquo put on his cloak.

MACBETH: Banquo, my friend. Where are you going?

BANQUO: I'm going horseback riding. **N1:** Banquo no longer trusts Macbeth. He remembers their meeting with the witches and wonders if he should tell the other lords about it.

MACBETH: Make sure you're back in time for tonight's feast.

BANQUO: I'll be there.

N2: Banquo leaves, and Macbeth sits on his throne, alone.

MACBETH (to himself): I think Banquo suspects me of killing Duncan.

N3: Two men sneak into the castle. They are murderers. Macbeth is expecting them.

MACBETH: I need to get rid of Banquo.

MURDERER 1: Whatever you say.

MACBETH: I have very good reasons

PLAY POINT:

Macbeth was a real king. He ruled Scotland from 1040 until his death in 1057.

that you wouldn't understand.

MURDERER 2 (shrugging): Whatever.

N4: The murderers leave.

Lady Macbeth walks through the cold castle. She thinks about what Macbeth did in order to be King.

LADY MACBETH (to herself): Now we have no peace of mind. Was it worth it?

N1: She tries to smile when she sees Macbeth.

LADY M: Dear husband, why are you always alone and brooding?

What's done is done.

MACBETH: O, full of scorpions is my mind, dear wife!

N2: Outside on the dark heath, the murderers cut Banquo's throat.

SCENE 7

N3: That evening, Macbeth holds his first feast as King of Scotland.

MACBETH: Welcome all! Sit down.

N4: One of the murderers creeps in.

MACBETH (whispering to murderer):

What are you doing here? There's blood on your face!

MURDERER: It's Banquo's blood.

MACBETH: Good. Now go.

N1: Macbeth returns to the table, trying to hide his guilt.

ROSS: Everyone's here to feast with you, your Highness.

MACBETH: It is too bad Banquo didn't make it.

ROSS: Yes, it is. Please sit, your Highness.

MACBETH: The table's full.

N2: Lennox points to Macbeth's chair. A ghostly figure sits in it, his back to Macbeth.

LENNOX: Here is a place reserved, sir.

MACBETH: Where?

LENNOX (puzzled): Right here. What's the matter?

N3: The ghostly figure turns and

SAY IT! suspicious — suh-SPISH-uhss